

THE  
SCOTTISH PHILOSOPHY;

A VINDICATION AND REPLY.

BY THE  
REV. JOHN CAIRNS, A.M.  
BERWICK.

EDINBURGH: THOMAS CONSTABLE AND CO.

HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO., LONDON.

MDCCCLVI.

THE  
SCOTTISH PHILOSOPHY;

A VINDICATION AND REPLY.

BY THE  
REV. JOHN CAIRNS, A.M.  
BERWICK.

EDINBURGH: THOMAS CONSTABLE AND CO.

HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO., LONDON.

MDCCCLVI.



## THE SCOTTISH PHILOSOPHY.

---

WHEN Professor Ferrier commenced in the "Institutes of Metaphysic" his assault on Scottish Philosophy, and in the flush of imagined victory sought to carry the Edinburgh Logic Chair as a base of further hostile operations, he probably did not anticipate the wide and determined resistance which his opinions and aims were to encounter. That resistance has become more extended and resolute as the public mind has awaked to the conviction, that the fortunes of the Scottish Philosophy are really at stake. It is no light matter to disturb a system which has its root deep in national character, and which, in the record of its development at home and its influence abroad, furnishes one of the brightest and purest chapters in the history of Philosophy. The interest of the philosophical world in the approaching election, has risen from this cause alone to its present excitement. In the capital of Scotland it is the principal topic of discussion; and the liveliest concern for the result is felt, not only in

America. Professor Brandis, a European name of the highest celebrity, pleads for the continuance of the Scottish School, on behalf of what is best and soundest in the Philosophy of Germany. And it is known from the most unquestionable sources, that the leading authorities in the Philosophy of France, with a filial devotion to the memory of Reid and Dugald Stewart, by whose labours the speculation of that great nation was rescued from materialism, are at present waiting with as much anxiety in Paris as can be felt in Edinburgh, to see whether it be possible for the Scottish Philosophy to receive a public wound and dishonour in the land of its birth, and in connexion with the University which has been the seat of its most recent distinction.

It would be weak and childish to represent the permanent vitality of any philosophical system as suspended upon a University appointment, no matter how important. Philosophy, like religion, can live in exile, and conquer by martyrdom. But though secure of final triumph, this vital interest of mankind, like all our highest interests, is capable, from outward influences, of serious retardation and disaster; and the temporary ascendancy of philosophical error in a commanding centre of light and instruction, like the University of Edinburgh, is an evil which cannot but be gravely estimated by every enlightened mind.

It was from a serious conviction that such philo-

tending in its consequences and ramifications, was contained in Professor Ferrier's "Theory of Knowing and Being," and that his election to the vacant Chair of Logic and Metaphysics in the Metropolitan University, would not only reverse the teaching of the Scottish School, but substitute in its place a modification of Hegelian Logic and Ontology, that I published some weeks ago an Examination of his Treatise, and in the same Pamphlet, an appeal to the philosophical mind of the country against his election. I have been charged, in making this appeal, with concealing a "latent design" under the guise of a philosophical disquisition. The design was open and avowed; and every word of my Tract, from first to last, was ostensibly made to bear on this practical issue.

It was to be expected, that in the natural excitement of such a controversy, severe and bitter charges would be brought against the public opponent of a candidate supported by an influential party, and that a discussion in Philosophy would tend to degenerate into personality and violence. The serious accusations laid to my charge by the defenders of Professor Ferrier, anonymous and avowed, have not taken me by surprise; and only a firm conviction of the goodness of the cause I humbly ventured to advocate, and of the urgency of the crisis, could have induced me to brave them, and to take a step which I foresaw would bring them on my head. I can honestly say, that this anticipation led me to take the step which I have now taken.



study the meaning and bearings of Professor Ferrier's system, and to advance against it no argument that could not be thoroughly supported, as well as to avoid everything in tone and style needlessly painful to that gentleman and his adherents. I have often and earnestly reviewed the whole question since, and in the light of what Professor Ferrier's defenders have brought forward ; and I must declare that I have not found a single representation or argument, and hardly a turn of expression that I could have wished to modify.

It is not my intention to reply to imputations on my character and motives, or to refute the aspersions of those who have represented me as condescending to "electioneering tricks," subserving "party purposes," and seeking "to raise an ephemeral popularity by building it on the ruins of a character." I leave these statements to those who choose to believe them, or whose interest it is to have them believed. If the momentous issues involved in the election are not acknowledged as sufficient to justify an honourable man in taking part in it from honourable motives, no further vindication would be of any avail.

I only notice one prevalent accusation, which, as it does injustice to Professor Ferrier as well as myself, I am anxious to repel. It has been asserted by those whose theory of the relation of moral causes and effects is always of the lowest and most ignoble character, that my opposition to Professor Ferrier's

allegation I solemnly and publicly deny. I appeal to Professor Ferrier himself, whether in our slight intercourse, thirteen or fourteen years ago, anything inconsistent with the most perfect courtesy ever passed between us ; and, for myself, I must state that this aspersion, when first circulated, had the character not only of an injury, but of a surprise. I have spoken in my pamphlet of Professor Ferrier personally with respect and good-will : and I endeavoured to display these feelings, less by compliments and professions altogether unsuitable in a work so necessarily unwelcome to him as my pamphlet, than by striving to represent his system fairly, and to deduce from it only such inferences as were obvious and legitimate.

I shall therefore limit this reply to matters bearing on the question in debate, which is this :—Have I fairly represented Professor Ferrier's system, and does it involve those grave and serious results which I have asserted ?

I shall not in this review take into consideration the various anonymous letters and discussions that have appeared in the Edinburgh newspapers on my pamphlet. They are in most cases so deformed by personalities as to sink beneath the level of philosophical debate ; and where they are not so, I cannot, on principle, engage in controversy with anonymous writers. I must extend this rule also to a pamphlet issued by the publishers of Professor Ferrier's "Insti-



tion and authority, it cannot be expected that a writer who gives his name should fight with a shadow, and the pamphlet is unfortunately of such a character that little philosophical result would accrue from its investigation.

It was probably to retrieve the mistake of this publication, that, at the eleventh hour, another pamphlet has been put forth by a defender of Professor Ferrier, who, for the first time in this controversy, writes with a name. This is entitled, "An Examination of Cairns' 'Examination of Professor Ferrier's Theory of Knowing and Being : ' by the Rev. J. Smith, Assistant Minister, New Greyfriars. William Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh." I regret to be obliged to say, that this gentleman, though he gives me credit for some intellectual qualities, and for "straightforward manliness," has the misfortune to adopt the same tone of personal invective as to my character, motives, and fairness of procedure which distinguish what he calls the "unpretending little pamphlet," whose lack of argument he labours to supplement.

Nevertheless, as he comes forward in the character of a minister of the gospel, and as he is almost the only man amongst Professor Ferrier's supporters who professes a distinct adherence to his system, and literally the only one who lends a name to his defence in this whole controversy, I shall make some reply to his criticisms and animadversions. I shall confine myself strictly to the

philosophical questions at issue, and answer no other of Mr. Smith's charges than those of misrepresentation and unfairness which he advances against me, displaying at the same time the inadequacy of his own defence of Professor Ferrier's system.\*

Mr. Smith charges me with one great misrepresentation, and, to give his words effect, prints in capital letters, "THIS MISREPRESENTATION PERVADES HIS WHOLE PAMPHLET," (p. 28.) It is that I repre-

\* I am relieved from all further allusion to Mr. Smith's personal charges by the following letter, received from him, and which, from a sense of duty, I notice, as I only can notice it, in this manner. It accompanied the pamphlet containing against me such accusations as that,—“I cater for and raise an ephemeral popularity by building it on the ruin of a character,” p. 33,—that “the liberty of the press has, in the hands of a *clergyman*, become synonymous with personal abuse,” p. 33,—that “it fills us with the liveliest indignation to notice the foul insinuations which, for mere party purposes, (we write this advisedly,) Mr. Cairns has levelled at the head of Professor Ferrier,” p. 32,—and that I have recourse to “a miserable electioneering trick, which demands the reprobation of the good, and may well excite the sorrow of the wise,” p. 30. I print the letter *verbatim et literatim* :—

“31, CLERK STREET, EDINBURGH,  
July 7, 1856.

“REV. SIR,—Will you kindly pardon the liberty I take in forwarding you along with this note a copy of my pamphlet.

“I sincerely trust that nothing has been said in it beyond the limits of legitimate controversy.

“I hope some day to have the privilege of a private conversation with you on the subject of Ferrier *versus* Reid, for I cannot but anticipate a great variety of useful information, after the knowledge and acuteness you have displayed in your Examination of Ferrier's system.

“I occupy but a comparatively humble position in the world, yet I trust you will believe me to be sincere when I state, that should you ever honour me with a visit, no one, unless it be Professor Ferrier—pray pardon this allusion—will receive a more hearty welcome in my lodgings.

“Permit me to remain, with every expression of respect for your ability and your high moral character, of which I have heard so much,

“Very truly yours,

“J. SMITH.

sent Professor Ferrier as "holding that everything is dependent on *me*." He affirms that I represent Professor Ferrier to hold and teach "that mind, independent of *me*, is just as absurd as matter independent of *me*." The words are quoted from my pamphlet, (p. 17 ;) but the reader who turns it up will find to his amazement, that so far from representing Professor Ferrier as holding this, it is, in fact, an absurd conclusion to which I endeavour to shut him up, while he is allowed to be all the while struggling manfully to hold and maintain the contrary. Nay, more ; (will it be believed ?) the very proposition of Professor Ferrier's work, to which Mr. Smith refers me for the correction of my misrepresentation, (Prop. XIII.,) is the proposition which I had expressly cited (pp. 316-318) to shew how anxious Professor Ferrier was to make out that "mind independent of *me*" was NOT "as absurd as matter independent of *me*." This distinction, of course, I endeavoured to overturn, and to make good that on his own principles Professor Ferrier ought to hold the absurdity in both cases equal. I urged, that the very argument by which Professor Ferrier overturns the material world as existing apart from *me*, overturns *against his will* the spiritual world existing apart from *me*, because each person begins with himself, and cannot think anything outside of himself, consequently, cannot think any other mind, as existing in his own absence, without a contradiction. Mr. Smith has not



hended this argument of mine, and, of course, has not refuted it ; but having utterly failed to make out my perspicuous meaning, he charges me with misrepresenting Professor Ferrier. If Professor Ferrier admitted the equal absurdity, why should I have gone about laboriously to prove it ? why should I have said, as I did expressly, “ he has taken great pains to shew that the universe may be preserved *in other minds* when *mine* is asleep or withdrawn,” (p. 17,) before I attempted to make out that his pains were in vain, and that the absurdity could not be avoided ? What can be said of such ■ style of conducting philosophical controversy ? And what credit is due to Mr. Smith’s other charges, when it turns out that the misrepresentation is an entire delusion, and that, so far from pervading my whole pamphlet, the point in question is limited to pages 17, 18, and only repeated in ■ clause (p. 29) of the summing up at the end ?

I briefly notice Mr. Smith’s leading charge of unfair insinuation brought by me, he says (and adds that he writes it advisedly) against Professor Ferrier “ for mere party purposes.” Let the public judge between us. He charges me with introducing, in various places, the names of Spinoza and Hegel, in order to take advantage of the prejudice against them, with ■ view to injure Professor Ferrier. I shall speak of these names in order.

I had said that Professor Ferrier’s “ tendencies



modern times, Spinoza began and Hegel consummated." Mr. Smith charges me with putting Spinoza in place of Descartes—the true founder of the Demonstrative method, in order to damage Professor Ferrier. I simply reply, that I put Spinoza as the founder of the Demonstrative method, because he was so. To put Descartes in this place is to reverse one of the clearest facts in the history of mental science. Has Mr. Smith read and compared the Discourse on Method, Meditations and Principles of Descartes, on the one hand; and the Ethics of Spinoza on the other? or will he take the word of Dugald Stewart,—a name, it is to be hoped, not yet forgotten in Scotland,—who, in his Dissertation, (p. 56,) expressly styles Descartes—not the founder of the Demonstrative—but the “father of the Experimental Philosophy of the Human Mind?” Mr. Smith, indeed, here defends Professor Ferrier against that gentleman’s own wish. Professor Ferrier expressly and avowedly prefers the method of Spinoza to that of Dr. Reid. Thus, in his Institutes, (p. 496,) amongst other depreciatory remarks on Dr. Reid’s Philosophy of Common Sense, he thus speaks: “Oh! Catholic Reason of mankind, surely thou art not the real, but only the reputed mother of this anti-philosophical philosophy? *thy* children, I take it, are rather Plato’s Demigods, and Spinoza’s Titans.” So far from seeking to blacken Professor Ferrier’s character in relation to Spinoza, I supposed, and suppose still, that in this certainly

his admiration *to the method* of Spinoza, while he disclaimed *his results*. And for this charitable, and, ■ I believe, just interpretation, which is certainly more than covered by Professor Ferrier's own words, I am accused, by his defender, of uttering foul insinuations against his character !

With regard to Hegel, along with Fichte, my unfairness is alleged to consist in saying, that Professor Ferrier admires "the substance, and spirit, and direction of their speculations, and *only* complains of their obscurity,"—"leaving it to be inferred, (adds Mr. Smith,) that Ferrier approves of their latitudinarianism," (p. 31.) Why has Mr. Smith not told his readers that I have Professor Ferrier's own authority, and quote it from his book, (p. 96,) for his considering these writers "admirable in the substance and spirit and direction of their speculations?" What remained to complain of but their obscurity, as Professor Ferrier in the same place does? Surely Mr. Smith does not hold me to blame for the uneasiness which Professor Ferrier's own words awaken. So far from insinuating a Hegelian tendency in Professor Ferrier's Philosophy, I have directly asserted it. The two foundation principles of the Hegelian Philosophy, according to Mr. Morell, viz., the identity of thought and existence, and the union of two contradictories in all knowledge, I have incidentally pointed out in Professor Ferrier's system; and more particularly, after seeking to prove that Professor Ferrier

have remarked the resemblance, both of the process and the result, though in a mitigated form, to the Theology of Hegel. Is this insinuation, and not rather open assertion, challenging disproof and contradiction? How, then, has Mr. Smith met it? *He has quietly ignored my whole examination of Professor Ferrier's Philosophical Theology.* The three pages of my pamphlet (pp. 25-28) that discuss this subject are never once looked at. He has found it easier to talk of "sophistical arguments" without exposing them, and to denounce with needless vehemence the persecution which all great thinkers, from Friar Bacon, and Galileo, downward, have had to experience at the hands of the clergy. It is surely a new kind of persecution to subject a philosophical scheme of theology, (more especially when enforced by its author, as the only escape of reason from atheism,) to philosophic criticism, and to expose its weakness and error by fair arguments. I invited Professor Ferrier's friends to persecute my little tract in this fashion, and Mr. Smith, for one, is too tolerant to accept the challenge. This newborn zeal against persecution has no place when Professor Ferrier is the assailant, and the Scottish school the assailed. But the moment his own system, in its bearings on Natural Theology, is sifted, and an exposure made of its defects and hazards, not by appeals to ecclesiastical symbols, or even to Divine Revelation, but on the ground of the philo-

of thought are invoked, and alarmists talk of the revival of the Inquisition. It would have been better for Mr. Smith to have defended Professor Ferrier here, by manly argument than by outcries against bigotry and persecution ; and till he or some one else attempt this, I shall hold this portion of my pamphlet as not even replied to, far less answered. This unanswered criticism of Professor Ferrier's philosophical theology, in which, while opposing his errors, I have openly acknowledged "that his good intentions are beyond dispute," Mr. Smith is pleased to call "personal abuse," and to exclaim, "*O tempora, O mores !*"

I do not notice some minor charges of unfairness, such as that I have not quoted Professor Ferrier's first principle in his own words. I did not profess to do so ; but I gave his clear sense in ■ shorter form ; and Mr. Smith has not attempted to show that any ill consequences arise in the course of the argument. He also charges me with being "anxious to twist Ferrier's views" of the material world "into pure idealism," (p. 22.) A more inaccurate statement was never made. So far from this, I even, in my pamphlet, (p. 15,) gave a quotation from the Institutes, extending over half a page, to allow Professor Ferrier himself to explain the difference between his views and pure idealism. I do not think that Professor Ferrier makes out by his "limbo of the contradictory," and his ■ "purgatory of nonsense,"



idealists ; but I gave him the fullest justice in quoting him to explain, in his own language, what he conceived that difference to be. I must ask, Has Mr. Smith read through the pamphlet he professes to examine ? I am at a loss to account for his having so misunderstood it, and also left such large portions of it unanswered, including, besides omissions already noticed, my whole refutation of Professor Ferrier's Theory of Ignorance, (pp. 23-25)—a theory which that gentleman considers so vital, that he calls his Institutes without it “a mere rope of sand.”

I might here stop, for Mr. Smith cannot be considered to have entitled himself to any further reply ; but that I may not seem to undervalue the reasonings of the sole avowed defender of Professor Ferrier's system, I shall proceed with the greatest possible brevity to notice the defence which Mr. Smith has attempted in the form of argument.

Mr. Smith attempts to vindicate the use of the logical law of contradiction as the highest test of necessary truth. He concedes to me that, ■ ■ logical law, it cannot be applied to facts of existence, or even to the matter of abstract propositions ; but he speaks of “a law *equivalent to the logical law of identity or contradiction, and which, as ■ logical law, is applied to the forms of propositions, but as ■ metaphysical law, is applied to the subject-matter of those propositions which are necessary truths.*” —(P. 8.) I utterly deny the existence of any such law half-logical half-

metaphysical. The two provinces are eternally distinct. This is ■ mere fetch to help Professor Ferrier out of ■ difficulty. Mr. Smith contends that this ambiguous law gives validity to mathematical axioms, such ■■ “If equals be added to equals, the whole are equal.” This axiom, however, rests on the ordinary law of contradiction, for it springs from our admission of the ideas of part and whole, since it would be inconsistent with these ideas that equal parts should not make equal wholes. Mr. Smith may see this very case of his thus refuted in Kant’s reply to the Wölfian philosopher Eberhard ; and he could not have chosen an instance more corroborative of my objection to Professor Ferrier ; for here there are two *suppositions*, viz., that you have equals, and that equals are added to equals ; whereas Professor Ferrier claims to apply the law of contradiction *not to work upon suppositions, but to establish necessary facts of existence*. Nor has Mr. Smith noticed my charge that Professor Ferrier virtually admits the insufficiency of his own method, *by taking for granted*, without any help from the law of contradiction, the fact of absolute existence, and of the existence of the universe.

As if doubtful of his ambiguous law, Mr. Smith argues that ordinary Logic is applicable to Metaphysics, ■■ one science is applicable to another science. Unquestionably. Every metaphysical or existential proposition must in its form be logical,

consistent with itself. But as to the truth or falsehood of its matter, unless it be a contradiction in terms, in which case it amounts to nothing at all, it soars into a region utterly above Logic, and is capable of being reached only by the faculties that deal with fact, viz., those of Common Sense or Fundamental Belief. Its logical form may be perfect, as are all the propositions in Euclid: and yet to suppose Euclid's points, lines, and triangles all actually existing *in rerum naturâ*, would be a rather dangerous inference for the mechanician or the engineer to make.

The deductive method, as opposed to the Scottish method of Induction and Necessary Fact, is defended at great length by Mr. Smith—the drift of whose reasoning, diffused over eight pages, (13-21,) is to show that such grievous blunders have hitherto been made in philosophy as only the deductive method can remedy. Mr. Smith seems to imagine that the Scottish Philosophy has some mortal antipathy to deduction, even from established principles. All that it condemns is the attempt to deduce, prematurely and dogmatically, all truths of philosophy from one. It will employ the synthetic method as freely as chemistry; but if any man in the present state of that science proposed to deduce all the chemical elements from one, and stuck to his demonstration in the face of incorrigible fact, instead of attempting by analysis to overcome the difficulties,

against which the Scottish Philosophy cannot cease to protest.

If, however, as Mr. Smith teaches, the deductive method be the grand remedy, why is philosophy still unhealed? This gentleman reasons ■ if Professor Ferrier had arisen, for the first time, by this method, to create light in darkness. Whereas, has it not, on his own showing, been in application at least for two centuries, as he contends, from the days of Descartes, though I refuse to go higher than Spinoza? By what magic is Professor Ferrier to succeed in the use of the deductive method, where, according to Mr. Smith's own melancholy portraiture, Descartes, Spinoza, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and others, have failed? It can only be by accident, or on the supposition that Professor Ferrier's genius exceeds theirs. I have too much respect for Professor Ferrier's genuine ability to discuss either of these alternatives, which his own defender leaves him. I will speak as sorrowfully as Mr. Smith of the aberrations of Philosophy; but these should teach humility, and should not herald the announcement of the last new system as a great and final discovery.

The inductive, or Scottish method, pretends to no such completeness. It proceeds on the great truth that we "know in part," and labours by slow generalization from facts, and by separation of the necessary from the contingent in our experience to reach some valid conclusions ■ to matter, the soul, and the



Scottish Philosophy as "hap-hazard." Let him extend his philosophical reading to Sir William Hamilton's "Dissertation on the Philosophy of Common Sense," appended to his edition of Reid, and he will acknowledge his mistake. To class with the principles of common sense, as the great teachers of that school have understood them, such vulgar inferences from the bodily senses, as that "the sun moves round the earth; or that there are only 212° of Fahr. of heat in the vapour of boiling water," betrays a range of philosophical study more easily appreciated than described. The Scottish school has not to learn from Mr. Smith that method in Philosophy is indispensable. There is a method of crossing the sea, though it be not on rails, and of exploring the river of truth by soundings, instead of venturing up its shallows on the smooth and deceitful tide of demonstration.

Mr. Smith's remarks on the existence of the material world are not more conclusive. He has added nothing to Professor Ferrier's assertion that it only *exists* along with mind, and that the opposite is a contradiction, whereas the whole contradiction is for it *to be known* apart from a mind knowing it. Mr. Smith stumbles at the doctrine of the Scottish school, that mind and matter may, and do exist apart, though they are known together. He may call this ■ contradiction ■ long as he chooses ; but till he prove it, which in this pamphlet he has not attempted, Professor Ferrier receives no defence at his hands. He repeats, also, Professor Ferrier's assertion, that this—the common

belief of mankind—leads to materialism and atheism. He approves the reasoning of “the unpretending little pamphlet,” according to which every man that holds the world to exist outside of himself and separate from himself, holds it to exist independently of God. Does Mr. Smith believe his own existence to be in such sense separate from God, that he is a creature of the Divine power, and not merely an idea existing in the Divine thought? If he hold this in regard to his own existence, this is all that the Scottish school hold in regard to the material world. They hold that, all is created by, and perpetually dependent on God, while, in some sense, matter and finite mind exist distinct from God and from each other. Is there atheism in this universal belief, which alone does homage to the creative power and preserving energy of Deity? Or if there be atheism in the creed of the believer in a separate material world, how does the believer (which Mr. Smith doubtless is) in separate finite minds escape the charge?

Mr. Smith has erred in supposing the point at issue between Dr. Reid and Professor Ferrier at all to respect the *substratum* of the material world. It is not what the material world in itself is—a totally different question—but, whether some external reality exist apart from mind—call it a collection of qualities, or qualities and substratum, or what you please. To place matter in synthesis with Deity does not allow Professor Ferrier to maintain any true existence of the material world, as Mr. Smith contends. So long

as matter is only *an object of the Divine conception*, and not also ■ *product of the Divine power*, it is not matter at all, and the reason of mankind will never reconcile itself to this shadow, as all that creation involves.

In my last observation, I have to notice Mr. Smith's attempt to grapple with my argument against Professor Ferrier's system in its bearing on personal identity. I only wish I could have added, that he does not leave his cause worse defended than before. I argued that the knowledge of personal identity requires *two acts of thought*, for I cannot know myself *to be the same self* within less mental experience than this. Whereas, Professor Ferrier does not allow room for a *second* act of thought, either by his first principle of self-consciousness, or by the law of contradiction, and thus leaves a person who denies his identity philosophically justified and absolved. Professor Ferrier, in dealing with personal identity,—which Mr. Smith justly states is indispensable to the coherence of his system,—has built up that system, and yet shut personal identity outside the door, while he afterwards seeks, by a mere assumption, to bring it in at the window. How does Mr. Smith procure for the mind enough of mental experience to escape my conclusion? *By dividing ONE act of thought into two*, so that I know myself, at the end of that act, to be the ■■■■ person I was at the beginning. There is, he reasons, a lapse of time in every thought, and I have not time to think of myself

must be parted by an interval. Now, I will not enter into the question of the abstract relation of our thoughts to the lapse of time. This, it is well known, is one of the most obscure questions in mental science. But I appeal to the whole world, *if we are conscious of the lapse of time in a single act of thought, or if we can tell that one thought is ended, except by a second thought being begun.* Mr. Smith thus fails to make out the conscious divisibility of each thought, and, consequently, utterly fails to establish in one thought the sense of personal identity. Besides, this is a most unfortunate argument for an adversary of materialism to employ ; for it inevitably abolishes the distinction between mind, as simple, arising from the unity of thought, and matter, as complex and divisible *ad infinitum*. I may as well know the thousandth part of a thought as the half of one. And thus Mr. Smith, in a vain attempt to rescue *personal identity*, sacrifices *personal unity and indivisibility*, and plays into the hands of the materialist, from whom it is his boast that Professor Ferrier for ever sets us free.

In parting with Mr. Smith, I am sorry to be obliged to notice one remaining mistake into which he has fallen, not respecting any question of Philosophy, but in regard to the consequences, as stated by me, of Professor Ferrier's appointment to the Logic Chair. He holds me to state absolutely, that, in that case, "our Schools will be reduced to the condition



in the sophist, the pupil in the sceptic, and the strength of intellect will not long survive the decay of conviction." These strong words were distinctly written by me, not in regard to Professor Ferrier's appointment, if effected by conviction of the truth of his system—but in regard to his appointment, if effected avowedly on the principle that the truth or falsehood of such systems is of little consequence, provided only they be constructed with ingenuity, and set forth with ability. These words I must with all earnestness repeat, and I would employ, if I could find them, yet stronger, to express my deep and utter dissent from a view which at once degrades Philosophy and ruins education. Have Professor Ferrier's supporters, then, that firm and settled conviction of the truth and importance of his system which would warrant them to revolutionize the teaching of Philosophy in the metropolis of Scotland, and that before the eyes of the whole learned world? Are they willing to be represented by Mr. Smith; and are his pleadings of a character to sustain the weight of this grave and solemn responsibility?

No faint denials of the fundamental discrepancy between Professor Ferrier's system and the whole Scottish philosophy, will in the least avail. Professor Ferrier, as has been seen, declares even the philosophy of Spinoza, which he calls Titan-like, to be, so far as its method is concerned, a truer birth of the Catholic reason than that of Dr. Reid. He asserts

in the same page of the Institutes, (496,) "That no amount of expository ingenuity (referring to the expositions of Stewart and Hamilton) has ever succeeded in conferring on his (Reid's) doctrines, even the lowest degree of scientific intelligibility." Unlike Hume, who admitted the deeply philosophical spirit of Reid, Professor Ferrier affirms that Reid, "in the higher regions of philosophy, was as helpless as a whale in a field of clover," (p. 495.) And he extends his censure to "our whole Scottish Philosophy of common sense," of which he speaks as "the *débris* of a defunct and exploded psychology, which is now swept away and effaced for ever by these ontological institutes," (p. 473.) These, and many similar expressions, together with the whole strain of his system, bring the matter to this clear and precise issue, that if Professor Ferrier triumphs, the Scottish Philosophy, in its whole compass, is not only set aside but trampled down; and hence Mr. Smith, true to the spirit of his master, already hails him (p. 5) as the "Destroyer of Scottish Psychology."

In closing this discussion, I cannot but express my earnest hope—a hope which grows with the clearness of the question, and with the gathering of mighty names from other lands to avert the common danger—that our world-renowned philosophy is not destined to the humiliation of a public proscription at the hands of the Patrons of the central Scottish

to be as unsuccessful in the field of practical contest, as I humbly venture to think it has been in that of speculative controversy. I will not believe that a school of Philosophy, so congenial to the national spirit, so identified with all the gravest interests and most serious inquiries of the Scottish people, which has been so long a cherished possession of all sects and parties at home, and a conspicuous landmark amid the vanishing clouds of transcendentalism, whether at home or abroad, is about to be displaced by a creation of yesterday, which has no root in the Scottish character, and which can only flourish by disintegrating and destroying the qualities of our native mind. Whatever the issue may be, this satisfaction will remain, that our time-honoured Philosophy has received a defence, at least earnest and sincere, and that an effort has been made, as by others, so by one who owes to it all that he accounts precious in intellectual habit and discipline, to maintain its place amid the academic institutions of Scotland.

